

Jon E. Cawthorne and Anne Marie Casey

Jon E. Cawthorne and Anne Marie Casey share plans for ACRL

Cast an informed vote in the election this spring



Jon E. Cawthorne



Anne Marie Casey

Ed. note: *C&RL News* offered the candidates for ACRL vice-president/president-elect, Jon E. Cawthorne and Anne Marie Casey, this opportunity to share their views with the membership. Although many of the issues facing ACRL are discussed informally at meetings, we want to use this venue to provide a forum to all members. We hope this will assist you in making an informed choice when you vote in the election this spring.

JON E. CAWTHORNE

Given the long history of leadership in ACRL, it is a great honor and privilege to stand as a candidate for vice-president/president-elect. During my 26-year career, ACRL has encouraged my growth through exposure to new colleagues and ideas, allowed me to develop my leadership skills on committees, and helped me establish an extensive professional network. I have always valued ACRL, and I appreciate being

at a point in my career where I am able to serve the association in this important leadership role.

I love everything about working in and leading academic libraries. Our librarians and staff guide amazing and passionate students as they find their interests and path in life. We all know dedicated, conscientious faculty who care about their discipline, their research, and student success; they inspire us to think about what we know in new ways. Let us also not forget all of the other talented academic staff we interact with through our work. Indeed, all of us are privileged to work within academic and college library environments.

Our libraries exist within institutions that confront funding challenges, impact student success and retention, and tackle generational shifts in learning delivery and use of technology. Within our profession, colleagues in ACRL have worked long and hard on the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, defining the value of academic libraries, and outlining opportunities in scholarly communication. Using ACRL as a platform, I look forward to encouraging, leading, and supporting these and many other collective actions that define excellence for ACRL and for us.

ACRL is positioned well now and in the future, to address and solve the large, complex challenges we all face as a profession. I know when we work together on common challenges we can position our noble pro-

fession for sustainability and success in the future. One of those common challenges we have faced for many years is attracting more talented, diverse individuals to our academic and research libraries. Thinking about ways we might work together collaboratively has led to the creation of the Diversity Alliance at ACRL.

ACRL Diversity Alliance

Residency programs that increase opportunities for underrepresented, diverse individuals have existed in academic and college libraries for over 30 years. The Diversity Alliance advances this commitment to residency programs in our profession in four significant ways: 1) Instead of two-year residencies, like the one I participated in at Ohio State University Libraries (1993–95), we encourage institutions to extend the residency to three years. 2) By linking our collective efforts under the Diversity Alliance, we demonstrate a national commitment to resolve an ongoing challenge in our profession. 3) Because attracting and recruiting diverse individuals goes beyond library schools, many institutions can still help build and expand our idea of a diversity pipeline through recruiting students, staff employees, and even alumni. 4) The Diversity Alliance is designed to help provide experience and support for current residents and also help leaders at all levels of our academic and research library organizations understand, respect, and champion diversity in all its forms.

I am deeply committed to the growth potential and promotion of the Diversity Alliance, especially now as diversity has become an ACRL goal. In 2015, the Diversity Alliance started with four institutions: West Virginia University, University of Iowa, Virginia Tech, and American University. Now, in only a few years, we have seen more than 50 institutions join the Alliance with the intention to establish residency programs. I trust more institutions will join in the coming years. This will be good for ACRL, but I see *all* college and research library job pools benefitting from

the numbers of qualified, enthusiastic people interested in building careers as college and research librarians. I am humbled by all the leaders who recognize that together we can collectively address this systemic lack of diversity in our profession. More importantly, each library organization may benefit by hiring professional librarians who are as diverse as the student bodies they serve. Consider this: the Diversity Alliance is one example of how cross-institutional partnerships can foster collaboration to solve similar challenges that we all face. Building these partnerships requires leadership.

Leadership, love, and hope

We work in an amazing profession. I hope together we will use the Diversity Alliance as a model to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion across higher education—and that we not stop there. We can become true interdisciplinary hubs on campuses throughout the country. As such, we will help students—our future leaders—recognize solutions to the very large challenges they face. I stand for election, yet elected or not, I will continue to bring my energy, positivity, and hope for all academic and college librarians and library workers to position our value at each respective campus and throughout our information industry for the rest of my career. I will continue to lead, mentor, and be an example for anyone working in college and research libraries who aspires to serve in leadership. By each leader inspiring the next, we will not only ensure our bright future in ACRL, but I hope we will all be encouraged to stretch ourselves and our thinking about what our profession becomes in the future.

ANNE MARIE CASEY

I am honored to stand for election for ACRL vice-president/president-elect. Being an active member in library professional associations was a concept instilled in me by my professors at the University of Michigan (UM) School of Information and has been an integral part of my career. From my grad

school days as one of the group of students who founded the first ALA Student Chapter at UM to my current involvement as cochair of an ACRL/LLAMA interdivisional committee, member of the ACRL 2019 Virtual Conference Program Committee and the Florida Library Association Board of Directors, my active involvement has enriched my life and enabled me to contribute to the success of libraries and librarians.

When I joined ACRL a decade into my career, I felt as though I had truly come home. As a librarian providing services to distance learners in the 1980s, I often wished for some collective wisdom and advice on the best ways to ensure that my colleagues and I were assisting those at a distance as effectively as those in our library. And then I discovered ACRL's Distance Learning Section (DLS). I joined DLS and learned through networking opportunities, programs, and publications about the best ways to meet the challenges of my job and to grow professionally as technology transformed the way we support distance learning. As I moved into library administration, ACRL has continued to be my go-to place for learning, networking, and growing into the best leader I can be.

Background

Throughout my career I have had the opportunity to engage in many different aspects of academic library work. I started out in part-time positions at the Greenfield Community College and Springfield Technical Community College libraries (both in Massachusetts), where I provided reference assistance to students of all ages. From there I worked as a reference and government documents librarian first at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette and then at the Springfield City Library in Massachusetts. The next step in my professional journey took me to National University in San Diego, a private institution that focuses on both residential and distance learning working adult students. I started there as the reference and serials librarian at the main campus and eventually became assistant director of the

nine-library system. From there I moved to Central Michigan University (CMU), first as a reference/instruction librarian for the distance learning programs and ending my long career there as associate dean of libraries. As I progressed into administration at CMU, I managed library operations and served as interim head of reference, technical services, and collection development during vacancies in each of those positions.

In 2009, I became library director at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, a private institution with two residential campuses, as well as a large and growing distance learning population. I have led successful strategic planning that guided innovation and development of new initiatives, including establishing the university institutional repository, despite repeated funding reductions and loss of positions. In 2014, I was asked to take on a larger role at the university. For three years, until I returned to the library, my primary responsibility was leading campus retention efforts. I also managed several departments in Student Affairs and reestablished the international student services department. This position enabled me to become intimately aware of the important roles academic libraries play in higher education and to advocate more effectively for the value of our library. My experience also proved invaluable to the library as it enabled us to build a much wider network of collaborative partnerships on campus and instilled into many departments the wealth of knowledge and skills that librarians can offer to all campus endeavors.

ACRL Plan for Excellence

As a member of the DLS Executive Committee when ACRL was soliciting member feedback prior to creating the Plan for Excellence, I was enthusiastically involved in gathering input from our membership. My dissertation focuses on academic libraries that weathered difficult challenges using their strategic priorities as agreed-upon guides to decision making and resource allocation. That research and my own experience have convinced me that good strategic plans, developed with

stakeholder input, and evaluated regularly, are the best way for organizations to maintain core values and to innovate. The ACRL Plan for Excellence reflects the priorities of our membership. My support of all its goals and objectives is whole-hearted, but the areas highlighted below hold a stronger significance for me and are those on which I would focus if elected president.

New roles and changing landscape

Higher education is transforming and the explosion of information at our fingertips, 24/7, necessitates academic libraries reimagining our roles. The literature is full of examples of the innovative ways libraries are answering the new priorities of their institutions. A quick glance through current academic library job postings shows titles and responsibilities that would not have been conceived a few short years ago. ACRL is responding through organizational support of new research, advocacy, and training, both in-person and virtual. Larger libraries continue to lead by demonstrating new avenues for academic librarians that serve as examples. But anticipating or responding to a changing higher education environment without abandoning core values can be challenging, especially to smaller or poorly resourced libraries. Through its goal to support the academic and research library workforce as we navigate change, ACRL provides the opportunities and training libraries need as we develop and embrace new roles.

When I moved from more traditional library settings into the relatively new world of distance learning librarianship, I often felt at a loss dealing with issues my education had not prepared me for. I discovered the answers to my many unique challenges through my ACRL involvement. Just as DLS provided what I needed to succeed in an evolving role, new ACRL interest groups, discussion groups, and other communities of practice can emerge to support libraries and librarians in the changing academy. My priority as president will be to promote new communities of practice, programs, and publi-

cations that help members effectively navigate and overcome those challenges.

Value of Academic Libraries

ACRL sponsors a large and growing body of literature on effective ways for academic and research libraries to demonstrate their impact and value to their parent institutions and the greater community. Last year I was selected to participate in a seven-month workshop on assessment and impact for academic librarians sponsored by our regional library consortium and taught by the researchers and authors of ACRL publications about library value and impact. Through this workshop our library learned how to effectively demonstrate new ways in which we contribute to the institution's highest priorities beyond our traditional mission and has garnered new attention and interest from university administration.

Professional development such as this can be vital to all academic and research libraries, but particularly to those without positions dedicated to assessment or marketing. Most, if not all, academic and research libraries make a substantial positive impact in the higher education environment and advance issues of equity, access, and inclusion. Yet, they may lack the tools or understanding to articulate the many roles beyond the traditional ones that libraries play in supporting their institutional missions. Another priority of my presidency, if elected, will be to focus on expanding professional development opportunities for assessment and advocacy of library impact.

Conclusion

I would like to thank the ACRL Nominating Committee for considering me. I have learned so much and grown as a librarian and as a leader through my involvement in ACRL over the years. Having the opportunity to serve in a leadership role in the association fills me with a sense of pride and the wish that I may bring skills and abilities to help others succeed in much the same way this organization and its members have helped me over the years. ♪